

CAPTAIN SCARFIELD*

BY HOWARD PYLE

PREFACE

The author of this narrative cannot recall that, in any history of the famous pirates, he has ever read a detailed and sufficient account of the life and death of Captain John Scarfield. Doubtless some data concerning his death and the destruction of his schooner might be gathered from the report of Lieutenant Mainwaring, now filed in the archives of the Navy department, but beyond such bald and bloodless narrative the author knows of nothing, unless it be the little chap-book history published by Isaiah Thomas in Newburyport about the year 1821-22, entitled, "A True History of the Life and Death of Captain Jack Scarfield." This lack of particularity in the history of one so notable in his profession it is the design of the present narrative in a measure to supply, and, if the author has seen fit to cast it in the form of a fictional story, it is only that it may make more easy reading for those who see fit to follow the tale from this to its conclusion.

I

Eleazer Cooper, or Captain Cooper, as was his better-known title in Philadelphia, was a prominent member of the Society of Friends. He was an overseer of the meeting and an occasional speaker upon particular occasions. When at home from one of his many voyages he never failed to occupy his seat in the meeting, both on First Day and Fifth Day, and he was regarded by his fellow-townsmen as a model of business integrity and of domestic responsibility.

More incidental to this story, however, it is to be narrated that Captain Cooper was one of those trading skippers who carried their own merchandise in their own vessels, which they sailed themselves, and on whose decks they did their own bartering. His vessel was a swift, large schooner, the *Eliza Cooper of Philadelphia*, named for his wife. His cruising grounds were the West India islands, and his mer-

*Published in The Northwestern Miller 1900.

chandise was flour and corn meal ground at the Brandywine Mills at Wilmington, Delaware.

During the War of 1812 he had earned, as was very well known, an extraordinary fortune in this trading; for flour and corn meal sold at fabulous prices in the French, Spanish, Dutch and Danish islands, cut off, as they were, from the rest of the world by the British blockade.

The running of this blockade was one of the most hazardous maritime ventures possible, but Captain Cooper had met with such unvaried success, and had sold his merchandise at such incredible profit that, at the end of the war, he found himself to have become one of the wealthiest merchants of his native city.

It was known at one time that his balance in the Mechanics' Bank was greater than that of any other individual depositor upon the books, and it was told of him that he had once deposited in the bank a chest of foreign silver coin, the exchanged value of which, when translated into American currency, was upwards of forty-two thousand dollars—a prodigious sum of money in those days.

In person, Captain Cooper was tall and angular of frame. His face was thin and severe, wearing continually an unsmiling, masklike expression of continent and unruffled sobriety. His manner was dry and taciturn, and his conduct and life were measured to the most absolute accord with the teachings of his religious belief.

He lived in an old-fashioned house on Front Street below Spruce—as pleasant, cheerful a house as ever a trading captain could return to. At the back of the house a lawn sloped steeply down toward the river. To the south stood the wharf and storehouses; to the north an orchard and kitchen garden bloomed with abundant verdure. Two large chestnut trees sheltered the porch and the little space of lawn, and when you sat under them in the shade you looked down the slope between two rows of box bushes directly across the shining river to the Jersey shore.

At the time of our story—that is, about the year 1820—this property had increased very greatly in value, but it was the old home of the Coopers, as Eleazer Cooper was entirely rich enough to indulge his fancy in such matters.

Accordingly, as he chose to live in the same house where his father and his grandfather had dwelt before him, he peremptorily, if quietly, refused all offers looking toward the purchase of the lot of ground—though it was now worth five or six times its former value.

As was said, it was a cheerful, pleasant home, impressing you when you entered it with the feeling of spotless and all-pervading cleanliness—a cleanliness that greeted you in the shining brass doorknocker; that entertained you in the sitting-room with its stiff, leather-covered furniture, the brass-headed tacks whereof sparkled like so many stars—a cleanliness that bade you farewell in the spotless stretch of sand-sprinkled hallway, the wooden floor of which was worn into knobs around the nailheads by the countless scourings and scrubblings to which it had been subjected, and which left behind them an all-pervading faint, fragrant odor of soap and warm water.

Eleazer Cooper and his wife were childless, but one inmate made the great, silent, shady house bright with life. Lucinda Fairbanks, a niece of Captain Cooper's by his only sister, was a handsome, sprightly girl of eighteen or twenty, and a great favorite in the Quaker society of the city.

It remains only to introduce the final, and perhaps the most important, actor of the narrative—Lieutenant James Mainwaring. During the past twelve months or so he had been a frequent visitor at the Cooper house. At this time he was a broad-shouldered, red-cheeked, stalwart fellow of twenty-six or twenty-eight. He was a great social favorite, and possessed the added romantic interest of having been aboard the *Constitution* when she fought the *Guerriere*, and of having, with his own hands, touched the match that fired the first gun of that great battle.

Mainwaring's mother and Eliza Cooper had always been intimate friends, and the coming and going of the young man during his leave of absence was looked upon in the house as quite a matter of course. Half a dozen times a week he would drop in to execute some little commission for the ladies, or, if Captain Cooper was at home, to smoke a pipe of tobacco with him, to sip a dram of his famous-old Jamaica rum, or to play a rubber of checkers of an evening.

It is not likely that either of the older people were the least aware of the real cause of his visits; still less did they suspect that any passages of sentiment had passed between the young people.

The truth was that Mainwaring and the young lady were very deeply in love. It was a love that they were obliged to keep a profound secret, for not only had Eleazer Cooper held the strictest sort of testimony against the late war—a testimony so rigorous as to render it altogether unlikely that one of so military a profession as Mainwaring practiced could hope for his consent to a suit for marriage, but Lucinda could not have married one not a member of the Society of Friends without losing her own birthright membership therein. She herself might not attach much weight to such a loss of membership in the Society, but her fear of, and her respect for, her uncle led her to walk very closely in her path of duty in this respect. Accordingly she and Mainwaring met as they could,—clandestinely,—and the stolen moments were very sweet. With equal secrecy Lucinda had, at the request of her lover, sat for a miniature portrait to Mrs. Gregory, which miniature, set in a gold medallion, Mainwaring, with a mild, sentimental pleasure, wore hung around his neck and beneath his shirt frill next his heart.

In the month of April of the year 1820 Mainwaring received orders to report at Washington. During the preceding autumn the West India pirates, and notably Captain Jack Scarfield, had been more than usually active, and the loss of the packet *Marblehead* (which, sailing from Charleston, South Carolina, was never heard of more) was attributed to them. Two other coasting vessels off the coast of Georgia had been looted and burned by Scarfield, and the government had at last aroused itself to the necessity of active measures for repressing these pests of the West India waters.

Mainwaring received orders to take command of the *Yankee*, a swift, light-draft, heavily-armed brig of war, and to cruise about the Bahama Islands and to capture and destroy all the pirates' vessels he could there discover.

On his way from Washington to New York, where the

Yankee was then waiting orders, Mainwaring stopped in Philadelphia to bid good-by to his many friends in that city. He called at the old Cooper house. It was on a Sunday afternoon. The spring was early and the weather extremely pleasant that day, being filled with a warmth almost as of summer. The apple trees were already in full bloom, and filled all the air with their fragrance. Everywhere there seemed to be the pervading hum of bees, and the drowsy, tepid sunshine was very delightful.

At that time Eleazer was just home from an unusually successful voyage to Antigua. Mainwaring found the family sitting under one of the still leafless chestnut trees, Captain Cooper smoking his long, clay pipe and lazily perusing a copy of the *National Gazette*. Eleazer listened with a great deal of interest to what Mainwaring had to say of his proposed cruise. He himself knew a great deal about the pirates, and singularly unbending from his normal, stiff taciturnity, he began telling of what he knew, particularly of Captain Scarfield—in whom he appeared to take an extraordinary interest.

Vastly to Mainwaring's surprise, the old Quaker assumed the position of a defendant of the pirates, protesting that the wickedness of the accused was enormously exaggerated. He declared that he knew some of the freebooters very well, and that at the most they were poor, misdirected wretches who had, by easy gradation, slid into their present evil ways from having been tempted by the government authorities to enter into privateering in the days of the late war. He conceded that Captain Scarfield had done many cruel and wicked deeds, but he averred that he had also performed many kind and benevolent actions. The world made no note of these latter, but took care only to condemn the evil that had been done. He acknowledged that it was true that the pirate had allowed his crew to cast lots for the wife and the daughter of the skipper of the *Northern Rose*, but there were none of his accusers who told how, at the risk of his own life and the lives of all his crew, he had given succor to the schooner *Halifax*, found adrift with all hands down with yellow fever. There was no defender of his actions to tell how he and his crew of

pirates had sailed the pest-stricken vessel almost into the rescuing waters of Kingston harbor.

Eleazer confessed that he could not deny that when Scarfield had tied the skipper of the *Baltimore Belle* naked to the foremast of his own brig he had permitted his crew of cut-throats (who were drunk at the time) to throw bottles at the helpless captive, who died that night of the wounds he had received. For this he was doubtless very justly condemned, but who was there to praise him when he had, at the risk of his life and in the face of the authorities, carried a cargo of provisions which he himself had purchased at Tampa Bay to the island of Bella Vista after the great hurricane of 1818? In this notable adventure he had barely escaped, after a two days' chase, the British frigate *Ceres*, whose captain, had a capture been effected, would instantly have hung the unfortunate man to the yard-arm in spite of the beneficent mission he was in the act of conducting.

In all this Eleazer had the air of conducting the case for the defendant. As he talked he became more and more animated and voluble. The light went out in his tobacco pipe, and a hectic spot appeared in either thin and sallow cheek. Mainwaring sat wondering to hear the severely peaceful Quaker preacher defending so notoriously bloody and cruel a cutthroat pirate as Captain Jack Scarfield. The warm and innocent surroundings, the old brick house looking down upon them, the odor of apple blossoms and the hum of bees seemed to make it all the more incongruous. And still the elderly Quaker skipper talked on and on with hardly an interruption, till the warm sun slanted to the west and the day began to decline.

That evening Mainwaring stayed to tea, and when he parted from Lucinda Fairbanks it was after nightfall, with a clear, round moon shining in the milky sky and a radiance pallid and unreal enveloping the old house, the blooming apple trees, the sloping lawn and the shining river beyond. He implored his sweetheart to let him tell her uncle and aunt of their acknowledged love and to ask the old man's consent to it, but she would not permit him to do so. They were so happy as they were; who knew but what her uncle

might forbid their fondness? Would he not wait a little longer? Maybe it would all come right after a while. She was so fond, so tender, so tearful at the nearness of their parting that he had not the heart to insist. At the same time it was with a feeling almost of despair that he realized that he must now be gone—maybe for the space of two years—without in all that time possessing the right to call her his before the world.

When he bade farewell to the older people it was with a choking feeling of bitter disappointment. He yet felt the pressure of her cheek against his shoulder, the touch of soft and velvet lips to his own. But what were such clandestine endearments compared to what might, perchance, be his—the right of calling her his own when he was far away and upon the distant sea? And, besides, he felt like a coward who had shirked his duty.

But he was very much in love. The next morning appeared in a drizzle of rain that followed the beautiful warmth of the day before. He had the coach all to himself, and in the damp and leathery solitude he drew out the little oval picture from beneath his shirt frill and looked long and fixedly with a fond and foolish joy at the innocent face, the blue eyes, the red, smiling lips depicted upon the satin-like, ivory surface.

II

For the better part of five months Mainwaring cruised about in the waters surrounding the Bahama Islands. In that time he ran to earth and dispersed a dozen nests of pirates. He destroyed no less than fifteen piratical crafts of all sizes, from a large half-decked whaleboat to a three-hundred-ton barkentine. The name of the *Yankee* became a terror to every sea wolf in the western tropics, and the waters of the Bahama Islands became swept almost clean of the gory wretches who had so lately infested it.

But the one freebooter of all others whom he sought—Captain Jack Scarfield—seemed to evade him like a shadow, to slip through his fingers like magic. Twice he came almost within touch of the famous marauder, both times in

the ominous wrecks that the pirate captain had left behind him. The first of these was the water-logged remains of a burned and still smoking wreck that he found adrift in the great Bahama channel. It was the *Water Witch of Salem*, but he did not learn her tragic story until, two weeks later, he discovered a part of her crew at Port Maria, on the north coast of Jamaica. It was, indeed, a dreadful story to which he listened. The castaways said that they of all the vessel's crew had been spared so that they might tell the commander of the *Yankee*, should they meet him, that he might keep what he found, with Captain Scarfield's compliments, who served it up to him hot cooked.

Three weeks later he rescued what remained of the crew of the blood-stained hulk of the *Baltimore Belle*, eight of whose crew, headed by the captain, had been tied hand and foot and hove overboard. Again, there was a message from Captain Scarfield to the commander of the *Yankee* that he might season what he found to suit his own taste.

Mainwaring was of a sanguine disposition, with fiery temper. He swore, with the utmost vehemence, that either he or John Scarfield would have to leave the earth.

He had little suspicion of how soon was to befall the ominous realization of his angry prophecy.

At that time one of the chief rendezvous of the pirates was the little island of San Jose, one of the southernmost of the Bahama group. Here, in the days before the coming of the *Yankee*, they were wont to put in to clean their vessels and to take in a fresh supply of provisions, gunpowder and rum, preparatory to renewing their attacks upon the peaceful commerce circulating up and down outside the islands, or through the wide stretches of the Bahama channel.

Mainwaring had made several descents upon this nest of freebooters. He had already made two notable captures, and it was here he hoped eventually to capture Captain Scarfield himself.

A brief description of this one-time notorious rendezvous of freebooters might not be out of place. It consisted of a little settlement of those wattled and mud-smeared houses such as you find through the West Indies. There were only three houses of a more pretentious sort, built of wood. One

of these was a storehouse, another was a rumshop, and a third a house in which dwelt a mulatto woman, who was reputed to be a sort of left-handed wife of Captain Scarfield's. The population was almost entirely black and brown. One or two Jews and a half-dozen Yankee traders, of hardly dubious honesty, comprised the entire white population. The rest consisted of a mongrel accumulation of negroes, mulattoes and half-caste Spaniards, and of a multitude of black or yellow women and children. The settlement stood in a bight of the beach forming a small harbor and affording a fair anchorage for small vessels, excepting it were against the beating of a southeasterly gale. The houses, or cabins, were surrounded by clusters of coco palms and growths of bananas, and a long curve of white beach, sheltered from the large Atlantic breakers that burst and exploded upon an outer bar, was drawn like a necklace around the semicircle of emerald green water.

Such was the famous pirates' settlement of San Jose—a paradise of nature and a hell of human depravity and wickedness, and it was to this spot that Mainwaring paid another visit a few days after rescuing the crew of the *Baltimore Belle* from her shattered and sinking wreck.

As the little bay with its fringe of palms and its cluster of wattled huts opened up to view, Mainwaring discovered a vessel lying at anchor in the little harbor. It was a large and well-rigged schooner of two hundred and fifty or three hundred tons burden. As the *Yankee* rounded to under the stern of the stranger and dropped anchor in such a position as to bring her broadside battery to bear should the occasion require, Mainwaring set his glass to his eye to read the name he could distinguish beneath the overhang of her stern. It is impossible to describe his infinite surprise when, the white lettering starting out in the circle of the glass, he read, *Eliza Cooper of Philadelphia*.

He could not believe the evidence of his senses. Certainly this sink of iniquity was the last place in the world he would have expected to have fallen in with Eleazer Cooper.

He ordered out the gig, and had himself immediately rowed over to the schooner. Whatever lingering doubts he

might have entertained as to the identity of the vessel were quickly dispelled when he beheld Captain Cooper himself standing at the gangway to meet him. The impassive face of the Friend showed neither surprise nor confusion at what must have been to him a most unexpected encounter.

But when he stepped upon the deck of the *Eliza Cooper* and looked about him, Mainwaring could hardly believe the evidence of his senses at the transformation that he beheld. Upon the main deck were eight twelve-pound carronade neatly covered with tarpaulin; in the bow a Long Tom, also snugly stowed away and covered, directed a veiled and muzzled snout out over the bowsprit.

It was entirely impossible for Mainwaring to conceal his astonishment at so unexpected a sight, and whether or not his own thoughts lent color to his imagination, it seemed to him that Eleazer Cooper concealed under the immobility of his countenance no small degree of confusion.

After Captain Cooper had led the way into the cabin and he and the younger man were seated over a pipe of tobacco and the invariable bottle of fine old Jamaica rum. Mainwaring made no attempt to refrain from questioning him as to the reason for this singular and ominous transformation.

"I am a man of peace, James Mainwaring," Eleazer replied, "but there are men of blood in these waters, and an appearance of great strength is of use to protect the innocent from the wicked. If I remained in appearance the peaceful trader I really am, how long does thee suppose I could remain unassailed in this place?"

It occurred to Mainwaring that the powerful armament he had beheld was rather extreme to be used merely as a preventive. He smoked for a while in silence and then he suddenly asked the other point blank whether, if it came to blows with such a one as Captain Scarfield, would he make a fight of it?

The Quaker trading captain regarded him for a while in silence. His look, it seemed to Mainwaring, appeared to be dubitative as to how far he dared to be frank. "Friend James," he said at last, "I may as well acknowledge that my officers and crew are somewhat worldly. Of a truth

they do not hold the same testimony as I. I am inclined to think that if it came to the point of a broil with those men of iniquity, my individual voice cast for peace would not be sufficient to keep my crew from meeting violence with violence. As for myself, thee knows who I am and what is my testimony in these matters."

Mainwaring made no comment as to the extremely questionable manner in which the Quaker proposed to beat the devil about the stump. Presently he asked his second question:

"And might I inquire," he said, "what you are doing here and why you find it necessary to come at all into such a wicked, dangerous place as this?"

"Indeed, I knew thee would ask that question of me," said the Friend; "and I will be entirely frank with thee. These men of blood are, after all, but human beings, and as human beings they need food. I have at present upon this vessel upwards of two hundred and fifty barrels of flour which will bring a higher price here than anywhere else in the West Indies. To be entirely frank with thee, I will tell thee that I was engaged in making a bargain for the sale of the greater part of my merchandise when the news of thy approach drove away my best customer."

Mainwaring sat for a while in smoking silence. What the other had told him explained many things he had not before understood. It explained why Captain Cooper got almost as much for his flour and corn meal now that peace had been declared as he had obtained when the war and the blockade were in full swing. It explained why he had been so strong a defender of Captain Scarfield and the pirates that afternoon in the garden. Meantime, what was to be done? Eleazer confessed openly that he dealt with the pirates. What now was his—Mainwaring's—duty in the case? Was the cargo of the *Eliza Cooper* contraband and subject to confiscation? And then another question framed itself in his mind. Who was this customer whom his approach had driven away?

As though he had formulated the inquiry into speech, the other began directly to speak of it. "I know," he said, "that in a moment thee will ask me who was this customer

of whom I have just now spoken. I have no desire to conceal his name from thee. It was the man who is known as Captain Jack, or Captain John Scarfield."

Mainwaring fairly started from his seat. "The devil you say!" he cried. "And how long has it been," he asked, "since he left you?"

The Quaker skipper carefully refilled his pipe, which he had by now smoked out. "I would judge," he said, "that it is a matter of four or five hours since news was brought overland by means of swift runners of thy approach. Immediately the man of wickedness disappeared." Here Eleazer set the bowl of his pipe to the candle flame and began puffing out voluminous clouds of smoke. "I would have thee understand, James Mainwaring," he resumed, "that I am no friend of this wicked and sinful man. His safety is nothing to me. It is only a question of buying upon his part and of selling upon mine. If it is any satisfaction to thee I will heartily promise to bring thee news if I hear anything of the man of Belial. I may furthermore say that I think it is likely thee will have news more or less directly of him within the space of a day. If this should happen, however, thee will have to do thy own fighting without help from me, for I am no man of combat nor of blood, and will take no hand in it either way."

It struck Mainwaring that the words contained some meaning that did not appear upon the surface. This significance struck him as so ambiguous that when he went aboard the *Yankee* he confided as much of his suspicions as he saw fit to his second in command, Lieutenant Underwood. As night descended he had a double watch set, and had everything prepared to repel any attack or surprise that might be attempted.

III

Night time in the tropics descends with a surprising rapidity. At one moment the earth is shining with the brightness of the twilight; the next, as it were, all things are suddenly swallowed into a gulf of darkness. The particular night of which this story treats was not entirely clear; the time of year was about the approach of the rainy

season, and the tepid, tropical clouds added obscurity to the darkness of the sky, so that the night fell with even more startling quickness than usual. The blackness was very dense. Now and then a group of drifting stars swam out of a rift in the vapors, but the night was curiously silent and of a velvety darkness.

As the obscurity had deepened, Mainwaring had ordered lanthorns to be lit and slung to the shrouds and to the stays, and the faint yellow of their illumination lit the level white of the snug little war vessel, gleaming here and there in a starlike spark upon the brass trimmings and causing the rows of cannons to assume curiously gigantic proportions.

For some reason Mainwaring was possessed by a strange, uneasy feeling. He walked restlessly up and down the deck for a time, and then, still full of anxieties for he knew not what, went into his cabin to finish writing up his log for the day. He unstrapped his cutlass and laid it upon the table, lit his pipe at the lanthorn and was about preparing to lay aside his coat when word was brought to him that the captain of the trading schooner was come alongside and had some private information to communicate to him.

Mainwaring surmised in an instant that the trader's visit related somehow to news of Captain Scarfield, and as immediately in the relief of something positive to face, all of his feeling of restlessness vanished like a shadow of mist. He gave orders that Captain Cooper should be immediately shown into the cabin, and in a few moments the tall, angular form of the Quaker skipper appeared in the narrow, lanthorn-lighted space.

Mainwaring at once saw that his visitor was strangely agitated and disturbed. He had taken off his hat, and shining beads of perspiration had gathered and stood clustered upon his forehead. He did not reply to Mainwaring's greeting; he did not, indeed, seem to hear it; but he came directly forward to the table and stood leaning with one hand upon the open logbook in which the lieutenant had just been writing. Mainwaring had reseated himself at the head of the table, and the tall figure of the skipper stood looking down at him as from a considerable height.

"James Mainwaring," he said, "I promised thee to re-

port if I had news of the pirate. Is thee ready now to hear my news?"

There was something so strange in his agitation that it began to infect Mainwaring with a feeling somewhat akin to that which appeared to disturb his visitor. "I know not what you mean, sir!" he cried, "by asking if I care to hear your news. At this moment I would rather have news of that scoundrel than to have anything I know of in the world."

"Thou would? Thou would?" cried the other, with mounting agitation. "Is thee in such haste to meet him as all that? Very well; very well, then. Suppose I could bring thee face to face with him—what then? Hey? Hey? Face to face with him, James Mainwaring!"

The thought instantly flashed into Mainwaring's mind that the pirate had returned to the island; that perhaps at that moment he was somewhere near at hand.

"I do not understand you, sir," he cried. "Do you mean to tell me that you know where the villain is? If so, lose no time in informing me, for every instant of delay may mean his chance of again escaping."

"No danger of that!" the other declared vehemently. "No danger of that! I'll tell thee where he is, and I'll bring thee to him quick enough!" And as he spoke he thumped his fist against the open logbook. In the vehemence of his growing excitement his eyes appeared to shine green in the lantern light, and the sweat that had stood in beads upon his forehead was now running in streams down his face. One drop hung like a jewel to the tip of his beaklike nose. He came a step nearer to Mainwaring and bent forward toward him, and there was something so strange and ominous in his bearing that the lieutenant instinctively drew back a little where he sat.

"Captain Scarfield sent something to you," said Eleazer almost in a raucous voice, "something that you will be surprised to see." And the lapse in his speech from the Quaker "thee" to the plural "you" struck Mainwaring as singularly strange.

As he was speaking, Eleazer was fumbling in a pocket of his long-tailed drab coat, and presently he brought something forth that gleamed in the lantern light.

The next moment Mainwaring saw leveled directly in his face the round and hollow nozzle of a pistol.

There was an instant of dead silence, and then: "I am the man you seek!" said Eleazer Cooper, in a tense and breathless voice.

The whole thing had happened so instantaneously and unexpectedly that for the moment Mainwaring sat like one petrified. Had a thunderbolt fallen from the silent sky and burst at his feet he could not have been more stunned. He was like one held in the meshes of a horrid nightmare, and he gazed as through a mist of impossibility into the lineaments of the well-known, sober face now transformed as from within into the aspect of a devil. That face, now ashy white, was distorted into a diabolical grin. The teeth glistened in the lamplight. The brows, twisted into a tense and convulsed frown, were drawn down into black shadows, through which the eyes burned a baleful green like the eyes of a wild animal driven to bay. Again he spoke in the same breathless voice. "I am John Scarfield! Look at me, then, if you want to see a pirate!" Again there was a little time of silence, through which Mainwaring heard his watch ticking loudly from where it hung against the bulkhead. Then once more the other began speaking. "You would chase me out of the West Indies, would you? God damn you! What are you come to now? You are caught in your own trap, and you'll squeal loud enough before you get out of it. Speak a word or make a movement, and I'll blow your brains out against the partition behind you! Listen to what I say, or you are a dead man. Sing out an order instantly for my mate and my bo's'n to come here to the cabin, and be quick about it, for my finger's on the trigger, and it's only a pull to shut your mouth forever."

It was astonishing to Mainwaring, in afterward thinking about it all, how quickly his mind began to recover its steadiness after that first astonishing shock. Even as the other was speaking he discovered that his brain was becoming clarified to a wonderful lucidity; his thoughts were becoming rearranged, and with a marvelous activity and an alertness he had never before experienced. He knew that if he moved to escape or uttered any outcry he would be in-

stantly a dead man; for the circle of the pistol barrel was directed full against his forehead and with the steadiness of a rock. If he could but for an instant divert that fixed and deadly attention he might still have a chance for life. With the thought an inspiration burst into his mind, and he instantly put it into execution; thought, inspiration and action, as in a flash, were one. He must make the other turn aside his deadly gaze, and instantly he roared out in a voice that stunned his own ears, "Strike, bo's'n! Strike, quick!"

Taken by surprise, and thinking, doubtless, that another enemy stood behind him, the pirate swung around like a flash with his pistol leveled against the blank boarding. Equally upon the instant he saw the trick that had been played upon him, and in a second flash had turned again. The turn and return had occupied but a moment of time, but that moment, thanks to the readiness of his own invention, had undoubtedly saved Mainwaring's life. As the other turned away his gaze for that brief instant, Mainwaring leaped forward and upon him. There was a flashing flame of fire as the pistol was discharged, and a deafening detonation that seemed to split his brain. For a moment, with reeling senses, he supposed himself to have been shot, the next he knew he had escaped. With the energy of despair he swung his enemy around and drove him with prodigious violence against the corner of the table. The pirate emitted a grunting cry, and then they fell together, Mainwaring upon the top, and the pistol clattered with them to the floor in their fall. Even as he fell, Mainwaring roared in a voice of thunder, "All hands repel boarders!" And then again, "All hands repel boarders!"

Whether hurt by the table edge or not, the fallen pirate struggled as though possessed of forty devils, and in a moment or two Mainwaring saw the shine of a long, keen knife that he had drawn from somewhere about his person. The lieutenant caught him by the wrist, but the other's muscles were as though made of steel. They both fought in despairing silence, the one to carry out his frustrated purpose to kill, the other to save his life. Again and again Mainwaring felt that the knife had been thrust against him,

piercing once his arm, once his shoulder and then his neck. He felt the warm blood streaming down his arm and body, and looked about him in despair. The pistol lay near upon the deck of the cabin. Still holding the other by the wrist as he could, Mainwaring snatched up the empty weapon and struck once and again at the bald, narrow forehead beneath him. A third blow he delivered with all the force he could command, and then with a violent and convulsive throe the straining muscles beneath him relaxed and grew limp, and the fight was won.

Through all the struggle he had been aware of the shouts of voices, of trampling of feet and discharge of fire-arms, and the thought came to him, even through his own danger, that the *Yankee* was being assaulted by the pirates. As he felt the struggling form beneath him loosen and dissolve into quietude, he leaped up, and snatching his cutlass, which still lay upon the table, rushed out upon the deck, leaving the stricken form lying twitching upon the floor behind him.

It was a fortunate thing that he had set double watches and had prepared himself for some attack from the pirates, otherwise the *Yankee* would certainly have been lost. As it was, the surprise was so overwhelming that the pirates, who had been concealed in the large whaleboat that had come alongside, were not only able to gain a foothold upon the deck, but for a time it seemed as though they would drive the crew of the brig below the hatches.

But as Mainwaring, streaming with blood, rushed out upon the deck, the pirates became immediately aware that their own captain must have been overpowered, and in an instant their desperate energy began to evaporate. One or two jumped overboard; one, who seemed to be the mate, fell dead from a pistol shot, and then, in the turn of a hand, there was a rush of a retreat and a vision of leaping forms in the dusky light of the lanthorns, and a sound of splashing in the water below.

The crew of the *Yankee* continued firing at the phosphorescent wakes of the swimming bodies, but whether with effect it was impossible at the time to tell.

IV

The pirate captain did not die immediately. He lingered for three or four days, now and then unconscious, now and then semiconscious, but always deliriously wandering. All the while he thus lay dying, the mulatto woman, with whom he lived in this part of his extraordinary dual existence, nursed and cared for him with such rude attentions as the surroundings afforded. In the wanderings of his mind the same duality of life followed him. Now and then he would appear the calm, sober, self-contained, well-ordered member of a peaceful society that his friends in his far-away home knew him to be; at other times the nether part of his nature would leap up into life like a wild beast, furious and gnashing. At the one time he talked evenly and clearly of peaceful things; at the other time he blasphemed and hooted with fury.

Several times Mainwaring, though racked by his own wounds, sat beside the dying man through the silent watches of the tropical nights. Oftentimes upon these occasions as he looked at the thin, lean face babbling and talking so aimlessly, he wondered what it all meant. Could it have been madness—madness in which the separate entities of good and bad each had, in its turn, a perfect and distinct existence? He chose to think that this was the case. Who, within his inner consciousness, does not feel that same ferine, savage man struggling against the stern, adamant bonds of morality and decorum? Were those bonds burst asunder, as they were with this man, might not the wild beast rush forth, as it had rushed forth in him, to rend and to tear? Such were the questions that Mainwaring asked himself. And how had it all come about? By what easy gradations had the respectable Quaker skipper descended from the decorum of his home life, step by step, into such a gulf of iniquity? Many such thoughts passed through Mainwaring's mind, and he pondered them through the still reaches of the tropical nights while he sat watching the pirate captain struggle out of the world he had so long burdened. At last the poor wretch died, and the earth was well quit of one of its torments.

A systematic search was made through the island for the scattered crew, but none was captured. Either there were some secret hiding-places upon the island (which was not very likely) or else they had escaped in boats hidden somewhere among the tropical foliage. At any rate, they were gone.

Nor, search as he would, could Mainwaring find a trace of any of the pirate treasure. After the pirate's death and under close questioning, the weeping mulatto woman so far broke down as to confess in broken English that Captain Scarfield had taken a quantity of silver money aboard his vessel, but either she was mistaken or else the pirates had taken it thence again and had hidden it somewhere else.

Nor would the treasure ever have been found but for a most fortuitous accident.

Mainwaring had given orders that the *Eliza Cooper* was to be burned, and a party was detailed to carry the order into execution. At this the cook of the *Yankee* came petitioning for some of the Wilmington and Brandywine flour to make some plum duff upon the morrow, and Mainwaring granted his request in so far that he ordered one of the men to knock open one of the barrels of flour and to supply the cook's demands.

The crew detailed to execute this modest order in connection with the destruction of the pirate vessel had not been gone a quarter of an hour when word came back that the hidden treasure had been found.

Mainwaring hurried aboard the *Eliza Cooper*, and there in the midst of the open flour barrel he beheld a great quantity of silver coin buried in and partly covered by the white meal. A systematic search was now made. One by one the flour barrels were heaved up from below and burst open on the deck and their contents searched, and if nothing but the meal was found it was swept overboard. The breeze was whitened with clouds of flour, and the white meal covered the surface of the ocean for yards around.

In all, upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars were found concealed beneath the innocent flour and meal. It was no wonder the pirate captain was so successful, when he could upon an instant's notice transform

himself from a wolf of the ocean to a peaceful Quaker trader selling flour to the hungry towns and settlements among the scattered islands of the West Indies, and so carrying his bloody treasure safely into his quiet, northern home.

In concluding this part of the narrative it may be added that a wide stripe of canvas painted black was discovered in the hold of the *Eliza Cooper*. Upon it, in great white letters, was painted the name, *Bloodhound*. Undoubtedly this was used upon occasions to cover the real and peaceful title of the trading schooner, just as its captain had, in reverse, covered his sanguine and cruel life by a thin sheet of morality and respectability.

This is the true story of the death of Captain Jack Scarfield.

The Newburyport chapbook, of which I have already spoken, speaks only of how the pirate disguised himself upon the ocean as a Quaker trader.

Nor is it likely that any one ever identified Eleazer Cooper with the pirate, for only Mainwaring, of all the crew of the *Yankee*, was exactly aware of the true identity of Captain Scarfield. All that was ever known to the world was that Eleazer Cooper had been killed in a fight with the pirates.

In a little less than a year Mainwaring was married to Lucinda Fairbanks. As to Eleazer Cooper's fortune, which eventually came into the possession of Mainwaring through his wife, it was many times a subject of speculation to the lieutenant how it had been earned. There were times when he felt well assured that a part of it at least was the fruit of piracy, but it was entirely impossible to guess how much more was the result of legitimate trading.

For a little time it seemed to Mainwaring that he should give it all up, but this was at once so impracticable and so quixotic that he presently abandoned it, and in time his qualms and misdoubts faded away and he settled himself down to enjoy that which had come to him through his marriage.

In time the Mainwarings removed to New York, and ultimately the fortune that the pirate Scarfield had left

behind him was used in part to found the great shipping-house of Mainwaring & Bigot, whose famous transatlantic packet-ships were in their time the admiration of the whole world.